

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. APPLN. NO. 10/023,436
ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. Q67094

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Patent Office for acknowledging Applicants' claim to foreign priority, and for indicating that the certified copies of the priority documents, Japanese Patent Application No. 2001-316256 dated October 15, 2001, Japanese Patent Application No. 2000-388437 dated December 21, 2000 and Japanese Patent Application No. 2000-388438 dated December 21, 2000, have been made of record in the file.

Applicants thank the Patent Office for initialing the references listed on the PTO/SB/08 A & B form submitted with the Information Disclosure Statement filed on June 18, 2004 and returning an initialed copy of the PTO/SB/08 A & B, thereby confirming that the listed references have been considered.

Claims 1-10 have been examined on their merits.

The Patent Office objects to claims 4-6 and 8-10 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 4-6 and 8-10 would be allowed if rewritten in independent form. Applicants herein cancel claims 4 and 8, and include their recitations in claim 1 and new claim 11.

Applicants herein add new claims 11-20. The new claims 11-20 are fully supported by the originally filed specification and claims, and do not add any new matter. Entry and consideration of the new claims 11-20 is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-3, 5-7 and 9-20 are all the claims presently pending in the application.

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1. Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Sobol (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0071035). Applicants traverse the rejection of claims 1-3 and 7, and insofar as the rejection might apply to new claims 11-20, at least for the reasons discussed below.

Applicants herein amend claim 1 with the recitations of cancelled claim 4. The Patent Office indicated in the November 4, 2004 Non-Final Office Action that such a combination would be allowable. Applicants submit that claim 1 is now allowable, and further submit that claims 2, 3 and 7 are allowable as well, at least by virtue of their dependency from claim 1. Applicants respectfully request that the § 103(a) rejection of claims 1-3 and 7 be withdrawn.

Applicants have incorporated the recitations of claim 1 and cancelled claim 8 into new independent claim 11. The Patent Office indicated in the November 4, 2004 Non-Final Office Action that such a combination would be allowable. Applicants submit that claim 11 is allowable, and further submit that claims 12-14 are allowable as well, at least by virtue of their dependency from claim 11.

With respect to new claim 15, Applicants submit that claim 15 is allowable for at least the same reasons as the combination of claims 1 and 4. Applicants submit that claim 15 is allowable, and further submit that claims 16 and 17 are allowable as well, at least by virtue of their dependency from claim 15.

With respect to new claim 18, Applicants submit that claim 18 is allowable for at least the same reasons as the combination of claims 1 and 8. Applicants submit that claim 18 is

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allowable, and further submit that claims 19 and 20 are allowable as well, at least by virtue of their dependency from claim 18.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

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CUSTOMER NUMBER

Paul J. Wilson
Paul J. Wilson
Registration No. 45,879

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